

Pale Spotted Catshark, *Asymbolus pallidus*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Simpfendorfer, C., Heupel, M.R. & Rigby, C.L.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Small deepwater tropical shark currently infrequently caught in trawl fisheries.		

Summary

The Pale Spotted Catshark (*Asymbolus pallidus*) is a small tropical catshark endemic to northeastern Australia. It is a discarded bycatch in the Queensland



East Coast Trawl Fishery but is infrequently caught as the deepwater trawl sector has a relatively low effort within its range. However, when it is caught, the mortality rate is high. There are currently no significant threats to the species. Therefore, it is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).

Distribution

The Pale Spotted Catshark is restricted to a confined region in northeast Australia from Swain Reefs to Cairns off the coast of Queensland, though it may be more widespread along the Queensland continental slope (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

Fisheries

The Pale Spotted Catshark is a discarded bycatch in the Queensland East Coast Trawl Fishery (deepwater component of the eastern king prawn sector). This sector has a relatively low fishing effort and the species is not frequently caught as the trawlers do not generally operate beyond 200 m depth, which is slightly deeper than the upper limit of the species' depth range. However, when the species is caught the mortality rate is high (C. Rigby unpubl. data). Currently, there are no other fishing pressures over the remainder of its geographic and bathymetric depth range off Queensland. Catch rates should be monitored if fishing intensity within its known geographic and depth range increases.

Habitat and biology

The Pale Spotted Catshark is found in on the continental shelf and slope at depths of 174–400 m (Last and Stevens 2009, Rigby et al. 2016). It is a small tropical species that reaches at least 47 cm total length (TL) with males mature at 33 cm TL and females mature at 35 cm TL (Last and Stevens 2009, Rigby et al. 2016).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 47 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 33 cm TL Females: 35 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 015025

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/41723/68609592>

Link to page at Shark References: <http://shark-references.com/species/view/Asymbolus-pallidus>

References

- Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. and Simpfendorfer, C.A. 2021. *The Action Plan for Australian Sharks and Rays 2021*. National Environmental Science Program, Marine Biodiversity Hub, Hobart.
- Last, P.R. and Stevens, J.D. 2009. *Sharks and Rays of Australia*. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Australia.
- Rigby C.L., White W.T., Simpfendorfer C.A. 2016. Deepwater Chondrichthyan Bycatch of the Eastern King Prawn Fishery in the Southern Great Barrier Reef, Australia. *PLoS ONE*. 2016:11(5), e0156036.